FBIS DAILY REPORT

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Vol VI No 041 *28 February 1980*

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GUERRILLAS SEIZE DOMINICAN EMBASSY; HEAVY GUNFIRE REPORTED

PA271936 Bogota Cadena Radial Super in Spanish 1920 GMT 27 Feb 80 PA

[Excerpts] Unidentified guerrillas occupied the Dominican Republic Embassy here today and are engaged in an exchange of crossfire with the army and police units. Although unconfirmed, it was reported that one soldier was killed. Prior to this, it was confirmed that a police noncommissioned officer, a soldier and a civilian were wounded.

Initially it was announced that 25 guerrillas had occupied the embassy, but unofficially it was learned there are more than 30. At this moment there is heavy shooting and a wounded policeman is being taken away. Several agents are posted covering the agents who are taking away their companion who was very close to the doors of the Dominican Republic Embassy. He apparently has been shot twice in the right leg.

There is a lot of shooting going on at this moment. Everyone is running and everyone is diving for the ground, because the situation is very delicate. We are here on the ground and can hear the shots 10 yards away.

Radio Station Reports Incident

PA271937 Bogota Cadena Radial Super in Spanish 1857 GMT 27 Feb 80 PA

[Excerpts] It seems that the incident at the Dominican Embassy today carried out by a guerrilla group, which has not been fully indentified, was a premeditated plan to sabotage a social diplomatic meeting being held at that embassy. This newscast has been covering the incident from its inception.

A summary of what happened up to now, at 1854, is as follows: At 1740, a group of 24 heavily armed guerrillas took over the Dominican Embassy where the diplomatic corps accredited to Colombia was celebrating the independence day of the Dominican Republic. The guerrillas entered by firing on the embassy guards, killing an E-2 sergeant identified as Sgt 2d Class Rafael Casareas Chavez. Subsequently, the guerrillas took the entire diplomatic corps hostage. Pablo Emilio Olivero, a Colombian citizen who is the U.S. ambassador's bodyguard, was wounded in the initial shooting. U.S. Ambassador Diego Asencio was also wounded. Later, Hector Gaviria Montoya, a soldier, was also wounded.

Meanwhile, several ambassadors accredited in Colombia are being held hostage, including the Chinese [ROC] ambassador, the apostolic nuncio and probably the U.S. ambassador. Right now, about 500 soldiers, policemen, secret agents and members of the military police are trying to control the situation.

The situation is still confusing because it is not known what guerrilla group has occupied that embassy. Excuse me, it has been established that the guerrillas who took over the Dominican Embassy are members of the Workers' Self-Defense Movement which claimed responsibility for the killing of former Minister Rafael Pardo Buelvas 1 and 1/2 years ago. It was also learned that the guerrillas arrived with their orange flag and that one of them was wounded in the shoulder.

M-19 Claims Responsibility

PA271959 Bogota Cadena Radial Super in Spanisy 1953 GMT 27 Feb 80 PA

[Report from mobile unit]

[Text] We are again hearing the shouts of the alleged guerrillas inside the embassy. At this time, the 19 April Movement [M-19] has just claimed responsibility for the embassy takeover.

U.S. Envoy Reported Hospitalized

PA211901 Madrid EFE in Spanish 1848 GMT 27 Feb 80 PA

[Text] Bogota, 27 Feb (EFE)--Diego Asencio, U.S. ambassador in Bogota, was wounded here today, when a group of persons occupied the Dominican Republic Embassy, it was learned from reliable sources. According to the report learned by EFE, the U.S. diplomat was attending a meeting of diplomats in the Dominican Republic Embassy.

Sources close to the embassy also announced that several ambassadors are being held hostage, while the unidentified elements are being surrounded by military troops and intelligence service units.

U.S. Ambassador Asencio has been taken to the central military hospital where he is receiving medical assistance.

Hospital Denies Report

PA271946 Bogota Cadena Radial Super in Spanish 1928 GMT 27 Feb 80 PA

[Text] The office of the director of the military hospital has just confirmed that U.S. Ambassador Diego Ascencio has not been admitted wounded to that health center. We repeat, the director of the military hospital declared that U.S. Ambassador Diego Ascencio has not been admitted to the hospital wounded or taken to any other hospital.

The report added that the person admitted was Pablo Emillio Olivares, a member of the ambassador's personal escort, who tried to protect him when the shooting started as 25 guerrillas stormed the embassy and captured approximately 45 ambassadors [as heard] who are being held hostage.

EFE Talks With Hostage

PA272027 Madrid EFE in Spanish 1956 GMT 27 Feb 80 PA

[By German Acero Espinosa]

[Excerpts] Bogota, 27 Feb (EFE)--One of the hostages in the Dominican Embassy in Bogota, occupied by a guerrilla group, told EFE by telephone that the situation at the embassy is "terrible."

Several ambassadors and their wives are being held hostage by 25 Colombian guerrillas. Anxiety is building up since it is not known exactly if the ambassadors being held hostage in the embassy are dead or alive, because shooting is heard frequently.

"It is frightful and terrible. I cannot describe what is happening inside the embassy. We are being held at gunpoint and with submachineguns," a witness who answered a call from EFE stated.

In a shakey voice, the witness, who did not reveal his identity, said a total of 25 guerrillas occupied the embassy at noon today as a diplomatic reception was about to begin.

"I saw one of the drivers shot in the head. I also saw U.S. Ambassador Diego Ascencio with several bullet wounds in several parts of his body," the witness said, hanging up the telephone when a guerrilla threatened to kill him.

"This is the worst thing I have ever seen. I do not know if we will get out of this alive. Outside there are hundreds of army and police units in front of the embassy, which has aroused the wrath of the guerrillas who are ready to risk anything," a man inside stated.

"The guerrillas, some masked, forcibly entered the embassy wielding submachineguns. They threatened all the diplomats who were attending a reception on the occasion of the Dominican Republic's national holiday," another witness said. "One of them, who appears to be young, is giving orders to the rest of the guerrillas," he added.

Embassy Destruction Threatened

PA271951 Madrid EFE in Spanish 1938 GMT 27 Feb 80 PA

[Text] Bogota, 27 Feb (EFE)--The guerrilla group which occupied the Dominican Embassy in Bogota this morning has warned that it will blow up the embassy and kill all the hostages if the public forces intervene within the next few minutes.

The guerrillas, approximately 25 of them, demanded the withdrawal of the army and the police from the embassy surroundings or "we will start killing all the hostages and blow up the embassy."

The guerrilla commando unit, which belongs to the Workers' Self-Defense Movement, are holding the Brazilian, Argentine, Belgian, Uruguayan, Austrian, Swedish and Salvadoran ambassadors among others. Angelo Acerbi, the apostolic nuncio, is also among the hostages, a military source told EFE.

Army and police units are surrounding the Dominican Embassy, located in front of the National University of Colombia, in Bogota's northwestern sector.

"The ambassadors are accompanied by their wives," a military security agent told EFE.

A symposium was being held at the offices of the Colombian Agricultural-Cattle Institute near the Dominican Embassy. It was being attended by delegates from 40 countries.

The situation is tense. The urban army and police units are gradually approaching the embassy to try to seize it and release the hostages.

Authorities Promise Not To Attack

PA272055 Madrid EFE in Spanish 2025 GMT 27 Feb 80 PA

[Excerpt] Bogota, 27 Feb (EFE)--Military and police authorities in Colombia have announced they will not try to barge into the Dominican Republic Embassy here, which is occupied by a guerrilla commando group.

Spokesmen for the armed and plainclothes police told EFE that while the diplomatic hostages are being held nothing will be done to prompt the assailants to kill them. However, total confusion reigns near the embassy because snipers posted in strategic places are still opening fire on anything that poses a danger to them. The authorities are trying to confirm the names of the ambassadors and other ranking officials who are inside the embassy.

Students Support Seizure

PA272111 Madrid EFE in Spanish 2031 GMT 27 Feb 80 PA

[Text] Bogota, 27 Feb (EFE)--Students of the National University of Colombia have begun to demonstrate in support of the guerrilla group that today seized the Dominican Republic Embassy in this capital.

Ramses Hackym, the reactor of the university, said that the administrative center will be closed until next week to prevent complications and demonstrations that might lead to confrontations with the public force.

The army, which laid siege to the university several weeks ago when it was announced that classes would be suspended until after the elections, is on the alert since the university is located directly across the street from the embassy, where a tense climate now exists.

It was also said that demonstrations would be repressed as much as possible to prevent violence.

University Activities Suspended

PA281253 Bogota Cadena Radial Super in Spanish 1200 GMT 28 Feb 80 PA

[Text] Bogota--Administrative work at the National University was suspended beginning today in the wake of the Dominican Embassy occupation across the street. Although the university is not in session, administrative personnel were still working but now all activities have been suspended.

Envoys Ask Dialog With Turbay

PA271955 Bogota Cadena Radial Super in Spanish 1927 GMT 27 Feb 80 PA

[Excerpts] At this moment there is a tense calm and the snipers posted on both sides of this avenue in front of the National University have ceased somewhat in their activities. The police are trying to get better located in order to have more control of the situation.

At this moment the guerrillas have said that the ambassadors wish to speak with the president, Julio Cesar Turbay Ayala, asking him to get in contact with the embassy.

Apparently they have lifted the blockade which they had on the telephones of the Dominican Embassy, because only a few minutes ago the authorities were trying to establish contact with the guerrillas, but all the phones appeared to be busy. In this manner, dialog has been initiated apparently between the guerrillas and Colombian authorities to find ways of solving this difficult situation which has arisen with the occupation of the Dominican Embassy in Colombia.

The alleged urban guerrillas are issuing proclamations and are shouting and asking that telephone service be restored. In this way we were able to record the voices of the guerrillas, who are saying that the ambassadors being held hostage want to speak with President Julio Cesar Turbay Ayala.

Communique No 1 Issued

PA272248 Bogota Cadena Radial Super in Spanish 2227 GMT 27 Feb 80 PA

[Communique No 1 issued by the information secretariat of the presidency dated 27 February 1980--read by announcer]

[Text] 1. At noon today, Wednesday, 27 February, the Dominican Embassy was taken over by subversive elements apparently of the 19 April Movement at a time when the independence of that nation was being celebrated.

2. There is no evidence that there are any persons wounded inside the embassy.

3. The Foreign Ministry reported that the following ambassadors accredited to our country were at the embassy at the time; the Dominican, U.S., Venezuelan, Costa Rican, Mexican, Uruguayan, Austrian, Salvadoran, Egyptian, Guatemalan, Haitian and Swiss ambassadors, the apostolic nuncio and the Paraguayan and Bolivian charges d'affaires as well as several Colombian Foreign Ministry officials.

Brazilian Envoy Said Hostage

PY272325 Buenos Aires LATIN in Spanish 2230 GMT 27 Feb 80 PY

[Text] Brasilia, 27 Feb (AFP)--Brazilian Ambassador to Colombia Geraldo Nascimento de Silva is among the diplomats held hostage by a group of guerrillas which seized the Dominican Republic Embassy today.

This report was made available to AFP by a spokesman of the Brazilian Foreign Ministry, who declined to make further comments on the incident. "We are limiting ourselves to awaiting the development of events," he stated.

Occupiers Demand Trial Be Halted

PA272245 Madrid EFE in Spanish 2203 GMT 27 Feb 80 PA

[Text] Bogota, 27 Feb (EFE)--The suspension of the trial against 219 members of the subversive M-19 group is reportedly one of the demands made by the people occupying the Dominican Embassy in Bogota.

An M-19 commando group, made up of 25 persons, has been holding at least seven ambassadors and many members of the diplomatic corps accredited in Colombia hostage since noon.

It has also been reported that early this afternoon the guerrillas demanded that two newsmen serve as mediators.

The trial against more than 200 M-19 members began in November and is considered one of the most important trials ever held against guerrillas in Latin America in this century.

Other Demands Reported

PA280115 Paris AFP in Spanish 0057 GMT 28 Feb 80 PA

[Text] Bogota, 27 Feb (AFP)--The guerrillas who today occupied the Dominican Embassy in Bogota and who are holding 14 diplomats hostage, have demanded $50 million for their release, Todelar Network reported tonight. They are also demanding the release of all political prisoners and the immediate withdrawal of the armed forces [from the embassy], the source added.

Government Refuses To Yield

PA272313 Bogota Cadena Radial Super in Spanish 2227 GMT 27 Feb 80 PA

[Excerpt] President Turbay is now meeting with Justice Minister Hugo Escobar Sierra. He has been in permanent phone contact with Communications Minister Jose Manuel Arias Carrizosa, Defense Minister Luis Carlos Camacho Leiva and Foreign Minister Diego Uribe Vargas.

It was officially reported that the government is not willing to yield to any of the demands of the 19 April Movement [M-19], which took over the Dominican Embassy.

Press Censorship Imposed

PA272243 Panama City Domestic Service in Spanish 2200 GMT 27 Feb 80 PA

[Special Bogota Radio Cadena Nacional report for Panama City Domestic Service]

[Excerpts] At this time, the situation is very tense. The Colombian Government, which is aware of the difficult situation it is facing, has decided to impose press censorship and has censored radio stations. Radio networks had been broadcasting from around the area and suddenly, they had to suspend their broadcasts on orders of the government. The government hopes that this impasse will have a satisfactory result and for this reason, justified the emergency measure.

The situation is very tense. The government--President Turbay Ayala--has called to his office the general staff of the armed forces, the ministers, the nations's main authorities to analyze the situation and to seek a solution.

Another report received here at Radio Cadena Nacional a few minutes ago from Mexico City confirms that Mexican Ambassador to Colombia Ricardo Galan is among the hostages in the Dominican Republic Embassy in Bogota.

The Mexican foreign affairs press office said that it is trying to confirm a report on whether other Mexican diplomats were among the hostages.

Red Cross Mediation Offered

PA272321 Bogota Cadena Radial Super in Spanish 2258 GMT 27 Feb 80 PA

[Communique No 2 issued by the Press and Information Secretariat of the Colombian Presidency dated 27 February 1980--read by announcer]

[Text] The Presidency of the Republic Press and Information Secretariat reports that at 1230 today a group of subversives attacked the Dominican Republic Embassy at a time when several members of the diplomatic corps had gathered to celebrate the Dominican Republic's independence day.

Units of the Brigade of Military Institutes and the Bogota Police Department immediately took measures to surround the area neighboring the embassy in order to insure the safety of the diplomats taken as hostages at the aforementioned diplomatic site. Shots from the embassy injured three members of the police and others who were near the building.

The national government has authorized Dr Guillermo Rueda Montana, director of the national Red Cross, to contact the subversives.

M-19 Rejects Offer

PA280056 Bogota Cadena Radial Super in Spanish 0032 GMT 28 Feb 80 PA

[Report on Communique No 3, issued by the Press and Information Secretariat of the Colombian Presidency on 27 February 1980]

[Text] The national government presidential information office has just released Communique No 3 in which it reveals that the 19 April Movement [M-19] subversive group, which has been occupying the Dominican Republic Embassy since noon today, refused to meet with the director of the national Red Cross who had been commissioned for this purpose by the national government.

The commando group's decision not to meet with Red Cross President Guillermo Reuda Montana is included in the Presidential Palace Press and Information Secretariat communique which reads as follows: The government authorized the President of the national Red Cross, Dr Guillermo Rueda Montana, to meet with the extremists who occupied the Dominican Republic Embassy. The subversive group refused to hold a dialog with the national Red Cross.

U.S. Envoy Chosen To Negotiate

PA280158 Madrid EFE in Spanish 0104 GMT 28 Feb 80 PA

[Text] Bogota, 27 Feb (EFE)--The 19 April Movement [M-19] guerrillas holding the Dominican Embassy in Bogota tonight made three demands for guaranteeing the lives of their diplomatic hostages.

Newsman Jorge Enrique Pulido, director of the Todelar Radio Network, spoke on the telephone with one of the guerrillas who apparently is the leader of the operation to seize the diplomatic mission.

The guerrilla said they are demanding $50 million, the release of political prisoners and the withdrawal of troops from around the Dominican Embassy. If these demands are not met, they will at no moment guarantee the lives of the hostages. The guerrilla, who did not identify himself, said that there are 20 ambassadors in the group of hostages, including U.S. Ambassador Diego Asensio. He also revealed that the embassy was seized to let the world know of the existence of political prisoners in Colombia and the abuse to which they are being submitted by military agents. He also said that one of the M-19 guerrillas had been killed in the intense shootout that took place inside the diplomatic mission. He added that the ambassadors had attended the funeral of the dead guerrilla, whom he refused to identify. He only indicated that he was part of the group that had participated in the operation, which occurred around 1730 GMT.

The newsman and director of the Todelar newscast, Jorge Enrique Pulido, offered himself as mediator and the guerrillas authorized entry for him into the diplomatic mission on Thursday at 1430 GMT. The guerrilla revealed that they had not permitted the entry of Guillermo Rueda Montana, the director of the Colombian Red Cross. Only an official of President Julio Cesar Turbay Ayala's government would be permitted in.

He announced that press bulletins would be issued within the next few hours to reveal all the details and causes of the occupation, which has been named "liberty and democracy." He also gave assurances that U.S. Ambassador Diego Asensio would head the delegation assigned to talk to the Colombian Government within a few hours.

He said that telephone lines are free so that the guerrillas and a representative of the government, preferably Foreign Minister Diego Uribe Vargas, can make their first contact. The anonymous guerrilla concluded by saying that the operation had been executed to commemorate the death of a M-19 guerrilla killed this week in the Colombian city of Cali, apparently after having been tortured by the military intelligence services.

Government Negotiators Arrive

PA280420 Paris AFP in Spanish 0346 GMT 28 Feb 80 PA

[Text] Bogota, 27 Feb (AFP)--The negotiators who will talk to the guerrillas who seized the Dominican Embassy here and are holding 16 diplomats hostage tonight entered the building with their arms high and holding white handkerchiefs.

Former Foreign Minister Alfredo Vasquez and physician Ernesto Martinez approached the building slowly surrounded by photographers and reporters.

Nervously, the subversives fired two shots which made the reporters flee while the door of the embassy was opened to admit the former minister and the person accompanying him.

The area is still cordoned off by the public forces and there are ambulances, police cars and firetrucks in the area as well as the luxury vehicles of the diplomats being held. Their drivers are commenting on the events and waiting for their employees to come out.

Negotiators Report to President

PA280500 Paris AFP in Spanish 0433 GMT 28 Feb 80 PA

[Text] Bogota, 27 Feb (AFP)--The mediators negotiating with the guerrillas (?who seized) the Dominican Embassy here emerged from the diplomatic mission after 1 and 1/2 hours of talks.

The two negotiators, former Colombian Foreign Minister Alfredo Vasquez Carrizosa and Dr Ernesto Martinez, immediately went to the Presidential Palace to report to President Julio Cesar Turbay and Foreign Minister Diego Uribe on the progress of the discussions.

Vasquez and Martinez declined emphatically to give any details of their negotiations, saying only that it is possible they may return to the embassy later in the night to continue the talks according to whatever instructions they may receive from the Colombian Government.

Panama Offers Mediation, Asylum

PA281302 Madrid EFE in Spanish 1240 GMT 28 Feb 80 PA

[Text] Bogota, 28 Feb (EFE)--The Panamanian Government today offered to mediate and grant political asylum to the guerrilla commando group that occupied the Dominican Embassy in Bogota yesterday.

According to Ambassador Cesar Rodriguez Maylin, his country's government has offered to mediate. He said if a favorable solution is reached, he would give political asylum, transportation and any other guarantee to the occupiers. Rodriguez Maylin added that he discussed the matter with Panamanian Foreign Minister Carlos Ozores and, since it is difficult to contact the embassy occupiers and the government, he decided to resort to the news media to make the offer.

The embassy was taken over around noon yesterday by about 25 men dressed in sports attire, apparently members of a 19 April Movement guerrilla cell.

M-19 Sets Deadline

PA281343 San Jose Radio Reloj in Spanish 1200 GMT 28 Feb 80 PA

[Text] Bogota--The 19 April Movement--the largest urban guerrilla group in Colombia--has placed in the hands of President Julio Cesar Turbay the fate of 60 diplomats it took hostage yesterday in a spectacular and bloody occupation of the Dominican Embassy and set a deadline of 2200 hours today to meet its demands.

M-19 Threatens To Kill Envoys

PA281502 Paris AFP in Spanish 1458 GMT 28 Feb 80 PA

[Text] Bogota, 28 Feb (AFP)--The 19 April Movement guerrillas who are holding 19 ambassadors hostage in the Dominican embassy here have threatened to kill several diplomats if their demands are not met by the Colombian Government.

Hostages Said 'Doing Fine'

PA281447 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 1429 GMT 28 Feb 80 PA

[Excerpts] Managua, 28 Feb (ACAN-EFE)--"All is completely calm," Commander "Uno," head of the guerrilla group that took over the Dominican Embassy in Bogota yesterday, said today. Commander "Uno" told Managua Radio Corporation's "Sucesos" newscast over the telephone that a guerrilla was killed and a young revolutionary girl was hurt in the incident.

He said all diplomatic hostages including the U.S. ambassador to Colombia are doing fine. U.S. Ambassador Diego Asencio said he is all right. He denied being hurt. He said "he is waiting for the outcome of the negotiations."

Number of Hostages Uncertain

PA281444 Buenos Aires LATIN in Spanish 1419 GMT 28 Feb 80 PA

[Excerpts] There were conflicting reports today as to the number of officials being held hostage, as the Colombian press set the number at 16 while the government officially reported 14.

The commander of the M-19's "Marcos Zambrano Column," which has claimed credit for the seizure, last night told the press by telephone from the Dominican Embassy that there were "20 ambassadors and at least 40 members of the consular corps" inside the embassy. It placed the number of hostages at approximately 150 without specifying their positions.

Swiss Propose Coordination

NC281135 Paris AFP in English 1130 GMT 28 Feb 80 NC

[Text] Bern, Switzerland, Feb 28 (AFP)--Switzerland today proposed setting up an international coordination bureau in the Venezuelan capital, Caracas, grouping countries whose ambassadors are being held hostage in neighbouring Colombia, it was announced here.

The proposal has won support from Austria, whose ambassador is one of the diplomats being held by extremists of the M-19 urban guerrilla movement at the Dominican Republic's Bogota Embassy, officials said.

The Swiss Foreign Ministry has meanwhile summoned Colombia's ambassador in Switzerland to express hopes that the crisis would be solved without bloodshed.

CARACAS CONDEMNS DOMINICAN EMBASSY TAKEOVER

PA280528 Buenos Aires LATIN in Spanish 0207 GMT 28 Feb 80 PA

[Text] Caracas, 27 Feb (LATIN)--Venezuela today strongly condemned the occupation of the Dominican Embassy in Bogota by a group of guerrillas who took 16 diplomats hostage, including Venezuelan Ambassador to Colombia, Virgilio Lovera. The Foreign Ministry added that Consul Francisco Jose Pacheco and Vice Consul Angela de Salar are also hostages. The guerrillas are holding 14 ambassadors and 2 charges d'affaires.

Venezuelan Foreign Minister Jose Alberto Zambrano today expressed to his Colombian colleague Diego Uribe Vargas "concern and anguish over these events." He expressed "confidence that he will know how to conduct the situation in order to insure the lives and freedom of those kidnaped," said an official communique. It expressed "the strongest rejection of the procedures used, which deserve the repudiation of the civilized world. Depriving innocent persons of their freedom constitutes a violation of the fundamental principle of respect for human rights," it added.

GOVERNMENT STUDYING CUBAN PROPOSAL TO RESOLVE DISPUTE

PA270209 Paris AFP in Spanish 1636 GMT 25 Feb 80 PA

[Text] Caracas, 25 Feb (AFP)--Cesar Rondon Lovera, Venezuelan ambassador to Havana, has told the morning paper EL UNIVERSAL that since Tuesday of last week the Venezuelan Foreign Ministry has been studying a joint agreement proposed by Cuba to overcome the differences between the two countries. The diplomat returned to Caracas last night aboard a charter flight together with 93 Cubans who entered Venezuela as immigrants. He will meet with Foreign Minister Jose Alberto Zambrano today to tell him about his talks with the Cuban authorities. Rondon Lovera reported that after several meetings with Cuban Foreign Minister Isidoro Malmierca and Carlos Rafael Rodriguez, vice president of the Cuban Council of State and ministers, they decided to present to Venezuela several alternatives to overcome their differences.

A total of nine Cubans forced their way into the Venezuelan Embassy last year and early in 1980. The militiamen guarding it opened fire on them bringing the relations between the two countries to their lowest point. Rondon Lovera returned to Havana but Cuban Ambassador Norberto Hernandez Curbelo has not yet returned to Caracas.

The diplomat, a personal friend of Venezuelan President Luis Herrera Campins, said that the Cuban proposals coincide with the two countries' interest in maintaining their relations at optimum levels. For this reason, he expressed optimism noting that under the present circumstances, only those who do not know the importance of relations between Venezuela and Cuba within their foreign policy and particularly within their policy toward the Caribbean nations, would think of a break in relations. Moreover, he reported that they are processing 1,236 visas for Cuban citizens and that there are many more requests.

Regarding the 93 Cubans who arrived with him, he said that it is a group made up of couples, old men and children, many of them former political prisoners who were pardoned 2 years ago. He added that some of them are being claimed by their relatives through the family integration program announced by Fidel Castro.

Rondon Lovera said that on the one hand Venezuelan Embassy serves as a bridge for persons who oppose the Castroite regime and want to get out of the country. However, Venezuela has the duty of maintaining relations with the Cuban Government from a humanitarian perspective.

EL SALVADOR

$50 MILLION LOAN, DONATION AGREEMENT SIGNED WITH U.S.

PA280229 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 2059 GMT 27 Feb 80 PA

[Text] San Salvador, 27 Feb (ACAN-EFE)--The U.S. and the Salvadoran governments signed here today the first of several loan and donation agreements for $50 million to be used for government emergency programs.

The program is aimed at boosting the economy and helping Salvadorans with low incomes. The document, signed by U.S. Embassy Charge d'Affaires James R. Cheek and top Salvadoran officials, will permit the delivery of the first $9 million of the total amount, which will be used for the development of small producers.

After the signing ceremony, Cheek reaffirmed the support of his country for the present Salvadoran authorities, noting that ever since 15 October when the revolutionary junta assumed power, the United States has been pleased to support "a platform of deep economic and social reforms, characterized by respect for human rights and a representative democracy."

He added: "Just last week, my government publicly reiterated in very firm statements its support for the revolutionary junta in view of threats against it."

He concluded by stating that this agreement is only the first step in his nation's commitment to helping the Salvadoran people in carrying out reforms which he described as "necessary."

COMMENTATOR SCORES THREATENED U.S. AID CUTOFF

PA270506 San Salvador DIARIO DE HOY in Spanish 26 Feb 80 pp 7, 23 PA

[Commentary by Rodolfo Antonio Herrera: "Where Does the United States Want to Take Us?"]

[Text] Reports arriving from Washington regarding the policy of Mr Carter's government toward our country are totally disappointing. Several elements are outstanding in these dispatches.

The principal one is the clear impression that the State Department has us under its tutelage and tnat we are not an independent and sovereign country.

Another element is the total blindness and refusal to see and recognize the total ineptitude of the Christian Democratic Party [PDC] to successfully confront the troubled situation in the country. The PDC politicians want to impose by force their anachronistic systems, with which they intend to solve the sociopolitical and economic problems. The worst part is that they want to effect deep changes without having any moral authority whatsoever. They are in the government out of sheer luck, without the will of the people, who are the sole trustees of sovereignty and who should determine the form of changes.

Another element contained in the reports from Washington concerns the obvious blackmail of our armed forces, who have been threatened with a reduction of the $50 million offered in assistance. The State Department has been crude in brandishing this threat, which our armed forces should totally disregard. They know better than anybody else the country's real situation.

Washington knows perfectly well that the situation of instability presented by the current junta, just as with the former junta, is primarily due to the incapacity of the PDC to govern intelligently and effectively, forgetting about their outmoded system. A major error which earned it a total loss of popularity was undermining the private enterprise sector trying to send it on a vacation, as if it were truly possible to do without this sector, which is the one that maintains the production of everything that we need and consume. Another big mistake was imposing Decree 114 to pave the way to the hasty, destabilizing reforms dedicated to the "rightwing oligarchy."

I think that the most advisable thing at the present time is to forget about the United States and its handouts, and also Venezuela and fend for ourselves as best as we can. We are the ones who know where the shoe hurts. It is obvious that the United States wants to take us to the Nicaraguan path.

SPANISH AMBASSADOR TO LEAVE COUNTRY 29 FEBRUARY

PA272308 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 2022 GMT 27 Feb 80 PA

[Excerpt] San Salvador, 27 Feb (ACAN-EFE)--Victor Sanchez-Mesas, Spanish ambassador to El Salvador, who was kept hostage by a leftist group a few weeks ago, will leave the country for good on 29 February.

Sanchez-Mesas, who had planned to move up his March vacation, has been transferred to the Foreign Ministry in Madrid.

Spanish Charge d'Affaires Juan Carlos de Ranero, who was also kept hostage by members of the leftist 28 February People's Leagues who took over the Spanish Embassy in San Salvador on 5 February to demand the release of several comrades, will also leave the country.

SOURCE DISMISSES POSSIBILITY OF U.S.-SPONSORED COUP

PA261759 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 1221 GMT 26 Feb 80 PA

[By Mauro Espinoza]

[Excerpts] San Salvador, 26 Feb (ACAN-EFE)--A source close to ranking official Salvadoran circles, told ACAN-EFE last night that they were not taking seriously the possibility that the United States is reportedly promoting a rightwing coup in El Salvador and that it had begun consulting other Central American governments in this regard.

The source added that Salvadoran Government officials granted little credibility to the Panama-datelined dispatch yesterday that these contacts had been initiated on Saturday in that country between U.S. delegates and a Panamanian commission.

The ranking official said the recent statements by the U.S. Government opposing a rightwing takeover in that Central American country are viewed as a guarantee for the stability of the Salvadoran Government. "It is not dismissed that within the U.S. Government the viability of a coup d'etat in El Salvador has been discussed in view of the equivocal belief that the Salvadoran Armed Forces oppose the socioeconomic reforms announced," the same source noted.

The source added that the ruling Salvadoran Government "trusts in the good judgment of the United States."

The source noted that to Salvadoran observers, the contact initiated by U.S. negotiators William Bowdler and Robert Pastor with Panamanian Government officials on Saturday in Panama would not necessarily indicate that the United States has decided to support the actions of the Salvadoran Government, but to render assistance to a reformist government.

The source added that the Salvadoran rightwing's promises to carry out economic reforms for the benefit of the people are nothing more than "ballyhoo" to which U.S. President Jimmy Carter is not paying too much attention. "The rightwing was a failure during the government of Gen Carlos Humberto Romero, who was overthrown on 15 October, and during the 100 years of former governments," the source stated.

Regarding the military and economic assistance offered by the U.S. Government to the ruling government groups in El Salvador, the source said the offer had been received and was being considered. "The assistance is considered minor," he said. He said that militarily it would mostly involve technical cooperation and provisioning in some aspects and not the arrival of advisers or U.S. soldiers to Salvadoran territory.

"The 'prior sounding out' in Panama--which we do not believe--regarding the rightwing coup d'etat, clearly demonstrates the intensity of the campaign launched by the economic groups still holding power in our country," the source added. He stressed that in the opinion of the Salvadoran Government members, the possibility of a coup d'etat has been weakened by the unity of the Salvadoran Armed Forces which have come out in favor of the reforms and which are ready to strip the small agriculture, exporting-banking minority of the economic power it possesses.

"It appears that there are many untalented civilians within the U.S. Government who still doubt the capacity of the Salvadoran Armed Forces and their work team. They still believe the armed institutions obey orders from the rightwing," the source said, commenting on the alleged U.S. discussion regarding the rightwing coup. The source added that the current Salvadoran Government is fully supported by the armed forces. Therefore one must expect that the reforms will be fully supported.

The source noted the conviction that the social changes promised will be carried out, even against the will of the armed ultrarightist and ultraleftist sectors, which thus far have not heeded the Revolutionary Government Junta's call to unity.

ZAMORA RIVAS DEATH LINKED TO COUP ATTEMPT

PA271618 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 1547 GMT 27 Feb 80 PA

[Excerpts] San Salvador, 27 Feb (ACAN-EFE)--The assassination on Saturday of Mario Zamora Rivas, attorney general of the poor and a prominent member of the Salvadoran Christian Democratic leadership, was reportedly part of the plan prepared by the coupists.

According to the PDC, also included were the public charges made by retired rightist officer Maj Roberto D'Aubuisson implicating Zamora Rivas and another Christian Democratic leader in the leadership of a leftist terrorist group.

The coupist felt that the death of the attorney general might have forced the PDC to withdraw from the government coalition, thereby justifying the contention that "it is impossible for there to be a government which includes leftist moderate civilians." Once the structure of the present government had broken down--which would have been the government's second crisis in less than 2 months--the right would have had a motive for the coup, after which it could proceed to "save the country."

Zamora Rivas' relatives as well as the PDC leadership have publicly accused Major D'Aubuisson and the rightists, specifically the National Association of Private Enterprise (ANEP) of plotting Zamora Rivas' death.

However, this morning the ANEP published a paid advertisement in which it condemns the assassination of the attorney general, "because it was an irrational act of violence." ANEP says that "if any one has a decisive responsibility for precipitating the political and social chaos that the country is experiencing, it is the Christian Democratic Party."

Political observers believe that changes may be expected shortly within the military high command, which would confirm once and for all the failure of the rightist coup attempt in El Salvador.

PDC URGES PUNISHMENT OF FRUSTRATED COUP PLOTTERS

PA271533 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 1452 GMT 27 Feb 80 PA

[Excerpts] San Salvador, 27 Feb (ACAN-EFE)--The Christian Democratic Party [PDC] of El Salvador today publicly asked the armed forces to punish the militarymen implicated in the frustrated coup this past weekend.

This is the first information, although not from the government, of the existence of a plot to overthrow the regime that came to power last 15 October when President Carlos Humberto Romero and most of his team were exiled.

For its part, the armed forces released a communique on Tuesday in which it reiterated "its 15 October 1979 commitment" and stressed "its total support" of the current Revolutionary Government Junta.

The alleged coup was reportedly planned by Salvadoran ultrarightwing sectors who are opposed to the current PDC-armed forces coalition.

The government leaders have promised to carry out several "structural reforms," including the nationalization of banking and foreign trade and an "overall agrarian reform" which radically modifies the current landholding system in El Salvador.

Apparently, the rightwing circles had prepared everything for a coup, because since the middle of last week it was rumored that there would be a nationwide industrial and business strike promoted by the management sector. The strike reportedly contributed to the confusion concerning the rightwing coup d'etat.

In its pronouncement, the PDC urges the armed forces to carry out, within a short time, the "structural reforms" which have already been presented in draft form to the governing junta. "Specifically, we refer to the nationalization of the financial system and to land and labor reform," the party says.

The rightist coup was openly promoted by a large-scale publicity campaign sponsored by the rightist sectors, in which they clearly hinted at the "need to overthrow the junta."

"The plot," the PDC says, "is an attack on the unity of the armed forces and the program of changes and represents a retrogressive attempt to restore a system that is historically obsolete and that has the same characteristics of repression, terrorism and assassinations which were denounced in the proclamation of the 15 October uprising." The pronouncement adds that "the Salvadoran people will never accept" the coup as an alternative to resolve the political crisis which this convulsed Central America country is experiencing.

FLARE-UP OF VIOLENCE PROMPTS INCREASED VIGILANCE

PA271944 Buenos Aires LATIN in Spanish 1820 GMT 27 Feb 80 PA

[By Adrian Aldana]

[Excerpt] San Salvador, 27 Feb (LATIN)--Violence flared up today in this troubled country after a group of leftist movements reiterated their intent to attain power, announcing a government platform that includes significant reforms.

In the past few hours at least 30 persons have been killed in clashes between security units and extremist groups, official sources reported today.

This morning masked men killed a professor in Morazan Department, 250 km west of here, thus adding to the discontent of the teachers who claim to be victims of a persecution campaign by the ultra-rightwing sectors.

Meanwhile, subversive groups last night shot and killed Leonardo Iaheta, treasurer of the Soccer Federation, the police reported today. Almost at the same time a group of armed civilians belonging to the Salvadoran Christian Peasants Federation clashed with soldiers, leaving 5 dead, according to official reports. The incident occurred in a rural sector of Suchitoto, 56 km north of this capital.

Another 15 guerrillas were killed yesterday in a clash with soldiers in Sonsonate, 73 km from here.

Meanwhile, unidentified rival groups engaged in a shootout this morning when the new mayor of Ciudad Delgado, 3 km from here, was taking the oath of office. Official reports indicate there were no casualties. A Public Works Ministry bus was burned.

The heightening of violence throughout the country has prompted authorities to redouble security near embassies in this capital and around all public buildings.

In a surprise move last night the 28 February People's Leagues (LP-28) abandoned the central marketplace they had occupied since the early part of the week and released some 20 hostages.

POLICE REPORT RELEASED ON ARRESTS OF CHACON, ARGUETA

PA280257 San Salvador Radio Cadena YSKL in Spanish 1700 GMT 27 Feb 80 PA

[Press bulletin of General Directorate of Salvadoran National Police--read by announcer]

[Text] It is hereby announced that yesterday at 1130 on Independencia Avenue in front of the flower clock in San Salvador, Juan Angel Chacon Vasquez, who was accompanied by minors Luz Elena Vanegas and Laura Patricia, was arrested because he was armed with a Smith and Wesson 38-caliber revolver and six cartridges, which were confiscated from him.

At 1100 today he was placed under the orders of the fifth penal judge who is hearing the cases of the occupation of the office of the National Administration of Waterworks and Sewers [ANDA] and the kidnaping of its personnel and the serious injuries inflicted on a special agent.

The aforementioned minors accompanying Chacon were released yesterday.

At 2000 on 28 February, Jose Carlos Guillermo Argueta Romero and Jose Guillermo Canengues Perez who are charged with the occupation of the Spanish and Panamanian embassies and the kidnaping of their personnel, including their ambassadors, were arrested. A Colt 9 mm pistol, 27 cartridges of the same caliber and 2 small homemade fragment grenades were confiscated from the first of these prisoners. A Smith and Wesson 357 caliber magnum revolver and 27 cartridges of the same caliber were confiscated from the second prisoner.

The General Directorate has sent a note to the attorney general today so that specific prosecutors will participate in the respective trials.

On reporting this to the Salvadoran people, the General Directorate of the National Police wants to state that the legal procedures have been fully carried out and that these prisoners have been remitted to the proper courts within the period established by law. Their human rights were respected during their arrest.

San Salvador, 27 February 1980.

LP-28 To Protest Arrests

PA280032 San Salvador Radio Cadena Central in Spanish 1816 GMT 27 Feb 80 PA

[Text] In view of the capture of our companeros, the people's struggle will advance in gigantic steps, members of the 28 February People's Leagues [LP-28] said today. They reported that they are planning activities to protest the captures.

They also said that it is false that the 15 persons killed in Santo Domingo de Guzman were members of the Revolutionary Peoples Army. They were active militants of the LP-28 in that area, they said.

Students Protest

PA272256 Paris AFP in Spanish 2028 GMT 27 Feb 80 PA

[Text] San Salvador, 27 Feb (AFP)--Groups of youths took to the streets of San Salvador again at noon today to erect barricades by blocking streets with buses and burning tires, in a preliminary reaction of leftist groups in view of the capture of three of their leaders by the police.

Juan Chacon, secretary general of the Peoples Revolutionary Bloc (BPR) and Carlos Argueta and Jose Guillermo Canengues, leaders of the 28 February People's Leagues were arrested by the police on 25 February. It was officially announced today that they will be held for trial.

According to the official police bulletin, Chacon is being accused of damages caused during the recent BPR occupation of the offices of the National Aqueduct Administration. Argueta and Canengues, responsible for the occupation of the Panamanian and Spanish embassies in this capital, are being accused of holding persons and the violent takeover of private property.

The country's Attorney General's Office will start the trial [as received] against the three leftist leaders, the police communique reported.

During the presentation of the prisoners to the press, the top BPR leader denied that he had been physically tortured but reported that he had been tortured psychologically. Meanwhile, Argueta and Canengues said that they had been tortured and beaten by the police.

Chacon was arrested together with his wife and a 3-month old daughter who were released today.

Almost at the same time that the police officially announced the arrest of the three leftist leaders, groups of youths were erecting barricades at noon today. Meanwhile, the authorities, without going out into the streets, reiterated their decision to maintain order.

GUATEMALA

U.S. OFFICIAL REJECTS CLAIM HE SUPPORTED BOYCOTT

PA270246 Guatemala Radio Nuevo Mundo in Spanish 1200 GMT 19 Feb 80 PA

[Text] Deputy Mapoleon Alfaro of the Revolutionary Party says that Guatemalans will have to accept statements made by Mr John H. Bushnell about an economic boycott against Guatemala. Bushnell says that his statements were distorted. Alfaro said that the Miami HERALD [17 February, page 3AW] had carried a clarification by Mr Bushnell, who said that he had not, at any moment, talked of an economic boycott against Guatemala.

He said that he had spoken to representatives of Guatemalan private enterprise about the Central American political situation. He said that he had discussed the country's economic development and political conflicts that are hindering economic development.

Regarding a report by the Economic Research Institute of the Francisco Marrouquin University saying that Bushnell did make that statement, Deputy Alfaro said that the main thing that concerns us, as politicians, is the clarification made by the representative of the U.S. State Department, because he was speaking in an official capacity and because he has a political post in the United States Government and, therefore, Guatemalans must believe in his clarification.

FUR LEADER ROMERO KIDNAPED BY UNIDENTIFIED INDIVIDUALS

PA272156 Paris AFP in Spanish 2010 GMT 27 Feb 80 PA

[Text] Guatemala City, 27 Feb (AFP)--Cesar Romero, a leader of the Social Democratic United Revolutionary Front (FUR), was kidnaped here today by unidentified individuals.

The reports indicate that Romero was pushed into a car by several men as he left his house in Guatemala City. So far no group has claimed responsibility for the kidnaping. Another FUR leader said this action is part of the campaign by official sectors to destroy the party. So far this year two FUR leaders have been assassinated.

It has also been reported that a university student was machinegunned by unidentified individuals in a vehicle in Guatemala City.

LEFTIST GUERRILLAS ATTACK MILITARY, RAILROAD INSTALLATIONS

PA270220 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 0153 GMT 26 Feb 80 PA

[Text] Guatemala City, 25 Feb (ACAN-EFE)--According to a report issued by the authorities today, leftist guerrilla groups attacked installations of the national and military police, the railroad and the eletric company in addition to a poor housing sector.

In El Peten Department, in northern Guatemala, the police station in Dolores was machine-gunned. Meanwhile, the military police post in El Chol was burned. The police found a large quanity of propaganda of the leftist rebel armed forces and the Poor People's Guerrilla Army [EGP] near the two places.

A group which left the letter "EGP" painted on the wall, burned the La Mills railroad station in San Antonio la Paz, a village north of Guatemala City, causing the temporary suspension of the service.

Another unknown group attacked the offices of the electric company in Amatitlan and fled with $4,000 after destroying the furniture.

Finally, it was reported that six houses in Colonia Lourdes, in the poor sector in northeastern Guatemala City, were burned by unidentified individuals who almost caused a very large fire because these houses are very flamable. The firemen worked for 3 hours in order to prevent the fire from spreading. The losses are estimated at $10,000.

There were no personal injuries in any of the reported cases.

HONDURAS

PAZ GARCIA ON COUNTRY'S SITUATION, U.S. VISIT

PA271601 Tegucigalpa Domestic Service in Spanish 0400 GMT 27 Feb 80 PA

[Excerpts] High-level officials of the IMF last night congratulated junta president Gen Policarpo Paz Garcia for the country's financial and economic stability.

The Honduran chief of state noted with satisfaction that, according to the latest IMF analysis, the Honduran economy is the one showing the greatest growth and progress in 1980 in Central America. Paz Garcia, who spoke earlier before the Council of the Americas on the country's current situation, said that the primary purpose of his visit to the United States will be to address the annual Central American conference which is dedicated to Honduras this year.

In his statements to newsmen, he reiterated that Honduras is a nation where peace and broad freedom exist, without repression and it has an electoral progress which will culminate with a constituent assembly in the month of April.

General Paz mentioned the possibility that after attending the Central American conference sponsored by the [word indistinct] of New Orleans, he may visit Washington to meet with President Carter. The main purpose of his visit would be to insist on the necessity of the United States providing financial assistance for the programs being implemented to expedite the agrarian reform process, improve housing in rural and outlying areas, and improve health and education services.

In answer to a question, he said he would not request military asistance, because we are in a position to resolve our own problems in that area. He also said negotiations for resolving our differences with El Salvador are progressing well. He noted that Honduras maintains a policy of noninterference in the domestic affairs of neighboring countries and hopes they will do likewise.

MINISTER PEREZ INTERVIEWED ON RELATIONS WITH EL SALVADOR

PA241525 San Jose LA NACION in Spanish 18 Feb 80 pp 6A, 8A PA

[Interview with Honduran Foreign Minister Eliseo Perez Cadalso granted to LA NACION correspondent Edgar Espinoza in Tegucigalpa--no date given]

[Text] Question: Why, 12 years after the breaking of relations between Honduras and El Salvador, has it not been possible to reach a solution?

Answer: I believe one of the reasons is an emotional one; the fact that throughout Central American history prior to 1969 you will not find a single conflict between Honduras and El Salvador. There were differences between Nicaragua and Guatemala, Honduras and Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua, Costa Rica and Nicaragua, El Salvador and Nicaragua and El Salvador and Guatemala, but never between Honduras and El Salvador.

That, I believe, is the basis for the resentment which, because of the long, deep and traditional bonds that always existed between those two peoples, and because of the rapidity and shock of what happened, has not yet worn off.

There have been negotiations at all levels, and I must explain that Honduras' position has not changed. From the beginning Honduras has maintained certain forms of behavior and claims, based on colonial titles, without any intention of gaining an advantage. Honduras will never accept even a brick that does not legitimately belong to it.

Of course, neither is it willing to lose that which is rightfully its own. The fact is--and I am not trying to blame anyone as we are here not to reopen an argument but to settle things--there have been some differences in the positions which have not been posed by Honduras. Our position has been unaltered since the beginning. We believe we are serious negotiators and we are committed not only by national opinion, but by international opinion.

Question: What would happen if, in the event of a settlement, the Salvadorans, because of their desperate domestic situation, would start an exodus to Honduras, as they have already begun toward Guatemala?

Answer: The first thing to do would be to settle the border issue. After this settlement, it would be possible to accept them, some merely for humane reasons, and others probably through established immigration agreements. The fact is that prior to the 1969 war, there were over half a million Salvadorans in our territory, mostly illegally, and who were not El Salvador's best citizens. When it was time to set laws on agrarian matters there was no discrimination between nationals and foreigners. The law was applied to all alike, but El Salvador believed our agrarian laws were aimed directly at its nationals. That triggered the unexpected aggression against Honduras, of course. But that is past history and we do not want to bring back sad memories as they will not contribute to easing the situation.

Question: We understand that as a result of its internal crisis, El Salvador is receiving arms from the United States. Don't you think this could be harmful to Honduras?

Answer: I am not aware of either the arms supply or the type of aid to be given to El Salvador, but as far as we are concerned, it has never crossed our minds that such arms would be used against us. I know we also have arms and could use them if necessary. I am a man of peace, however, and I cannot harbor such thoughts. In fact, we are engaged in an all-out effort to reach definite settlements with our sister nation of El Salvador.

Question: We understand Honduras has at present the best army in Central America?

Answer: This would be praise on your part to which I cannot reply because I am not an expert on such matters.

Question: Will you take to Costa Rica any new position which may lead to a settlement with El Salvador, or will it be an exchange of views?

Answer: We have always maintained the same position. We base our arguments on colonial documents, on "lutiposideti" (principle of American international law: "What you possess, you shall continue to possess"). This norm has served in many cases to establish borders between countries which belonged to the former Spanish crown.

Of course, since we are negotiating directly with each other and under the mediation of Costa Rica, we will attempt all peaceful procedures. Should mediation fail to yield results, we could still go to the International Court in The Hague. Let us pray to God, however, that we do not have to do so, because it is very costly and paradoxical that two poor countries should have to spend millions in border protection equipment when all that money could be used for internal projects such as schools, highways and health centers.

If we did have to go to the International Court, it would be very expensive to both countries to have to retain a team of foreign advisers. We--in all honesty--are in no condition to spend heavily without seriously affecting our budget and economy.

Question: What do you think of Costa Rica's willingness to mediate between the two countries in an effort to renew their peace negotiations?

Answer: Costa Rica continues to do honor to its tradition of good brotherliness, hospitality, and continues to show that it is a country with a friendly government with highly cordial and civilized people.

Question: However, Costa Rica's participation in the overthrow of Nicaragua's Somoza has been criticized in Central America.

Answer: Not as far as Honduras is concerned. We always maintained an equidistant, balanced attitude of nonintervention in the domestic and foreign affairs of our sister nations and at no time did we judge Costa Rica unfavorably. We have always considered Costa Rica our staunch sister; therefore, if any opinion was reflected, it probably was done through the press which here is excessively free, with no restrictions whatsoever. In general, however, I do not recall any unfavorable expression against Costa Rica having been voiced in official or popular circles.

Question: And the relations between Honduras and Nicaragua?

Answer: Relations between Honduras and Nicaragua at this time are normal, not counting isolated border incidents which go against the wishes and plans of the ranking authorities of both countries. For about 15 days, we took part in breaking up an operation apparently against Nicaragua. There were some 250 former Somozist guardsmen in this operation and this implied that those people were taking advantage of the asylum and guarantees offered in this country to prepare an attack against the Nicaraguan Government. True to our tradition of nonintervention in the affairs of other states, we broke up the operation without fanfare, as we were not trying to win praise or admiration, but were merely complying with the duty of a neutral country in dealing with any conflict within the Central American area.

Question: Mr Foreign Minister, what do you think of the current Central American situation?

Answer: Without a doubt it is very critical. All countries, to greater or lesser degrees, have problems, but our geopolitical bond and the aspiration for Central American unity still lives within us. Therefore, this aspiration for unity prevails over all differences, which we believe are only occasional in nature. We must remain united by emotion and conviction, by reason and sentimentality.

When we find ourselves outside the Central American area, our countries are so small that it is difficult for us to find them on the map. This makes it imperative for us to to integrate our defense and cooperation efforts so that we can be noticed and respected overseas.

Question: Isn't Honduras worried about suffering the same fate as Guatemala and El Salvador?

Answer: Not too much. Concerned, yes; fearful, no, because the liberation attained by us is the result of a long historic process, of a gradual maturing in which the motivation does not come from the outside, but which we ourselves provide and which the outside can see. Because we have been liberated internally and this has made every Honduran a responsible and conscientious being, our fear disappears, but not our concern. There are no extremely wealthy or extremely poor among our people. What is well distributed among us--as I once said--is not wealth because there is none; we have not produced sufficiently. What is well distributed is poverty and that creates something of a balance without creating the unfortunate imbalances observed in other situations.

We Hondurans are of the same mixture of races in action. The Honduran you find in Tegucigalpa, like myself, is a replica of the Honduran you find in Mosquitia, or Gracia, or Copan, or on the northern coast, all engaged in an active process of cultural integration. It is a Honduran who speaks Spanish, predominantly active [catalitico] who has no conflicts of racial discriminization. We all have the same historic, political and economic background; thus, we have very few such problems. We have three or four Indian reservations which have a reduced population by government decree in order to preserve the Indian race. But most of our people are halfbreeds and we all want the same things, we all think the same things, we all make the same successful decisions and the same mistakes.

Similar aspirations and follies make us a very special group, neither better nor worse than the rest of our Central American brothers.

Question: Don't you believe that sooner or later, foreign forces or forces inside the country may take advantage of the great social and economic problems of Honduras and lead it to a situation similar to that of El Salvador or Guatemala?

Answer: I will neither affirm nor deny this, but it will be very difficult because Honduras is protecting its liberty from such foreign penetration menaces which could reach us through either foreign or domestic sources. The Honduran who does not know how to read--about 40 to 47 percent in our country--listens to the radio and keeps abreast of developments. We have leftwing, extreme leftwing, socially moderate, center and conservative groups, but we respect each other, we treat each other cordially and we do not engage in loud confrontations. We are on the threshold of an election, and you will not find in the papers any ill feelings expressed by any one group against another.

Question: Why did Honduras wait so long to establish the electoral process, which was interrupted a decade ago?

Answer: There are several reasons. In social and economic areas, we cannot point to one thing, but a number of concurring causes. The armed forces took over power because we, the civilians, had given little evidence of our ability to exercise power. [paragraph continues]

Now it seems that with the appearance of new competitive cadres which have partly improved with the policy of the classical parties, we can enter a new civic adventure in which the civilians will reassume power.

The fact is that the political history of Honduras swings as a pendulum from blue to red; that is, from nationalists to liberals. This could be illustrated by the story of the monkeys and the tree: When a group of monkeys climbed up on a tree, they not only ate the tree's fruit, they defecated on those below; when the others climbed the tree, they would retaliate in revenge against those who abused them before. Fortunately, sectarian hatred has now disappeared in Honduras. Now you will see a liberal person and a nationalist sit down and talk with each other. The army plays a moderating role in this. The Christian church also plays an important role.

Question: Doesn't it appear, however, that it was not only the civilians who were unable to govern? During the last few years, the military governments have succeeded each another with coup after coup. Were they also incapable of exercising power?

Answer: Well, let's hope they will honor their word because now, through their leader President Policarpo Paz Garcia, there have been conclusive statements, written and verbal, that we are going to have elections on 20 April. This election will produce a national constituent assembly that will draft the constitution of the republic and probably--and this is already under discussion--take other steps. We do not know whether this constituent assembly will elect a president on a definite or provisional basis or an executive branch in general, or withdraw after concluding its functions of drafting the nation's constitution.

Question: There is much talk of corruption in some military sectors. Is this true?

Answer: This is a most difficult issue. It is a Latin American ailment and exists not only in Honduras. Concerning the army officers, I could neither affirm nor deny this as it is most difficult to prove. I have not seen proof of this either in the press or in the libelous statements made against the army. We are, however, simply a developing nation, a small and poor nation, and we are a people with a heritage of extreme situations and difficulties. So I neither affirm nor deny this because these are phenomena typical of our condition as an underdeveloped nation.

Further Comments After Talks

PA270141 Tegucigalpa Radio America in Spanish 1700 GMT 26 Feb 80 PA

[Distributed by Inter-Central American Radio Organization]

[Text] Five of the seven topics discussed during a meeting held in San Jose, Costa Rica last week by Honduran Foreign Minister Eliseo Perez Cadalso and Salvadoran Foreign Minister Fidel Chavez Mena were ironed out. They decided to hold two more meetings before 15 March. Mediator Jose Luis Bustamante y Rivero will attend one of those meetings.

Perez Cadalso said that in some areas they had reached 95 percent agreement, while in others they are in total agreement. The latter are: peace and the treaty, human rights and the family, reciprocal claims, free transit and another topic he could not remember. Still pending are those items related to the border issue and the common market, he added.

He said that in a gentlemen's agreement 3 years ago the two governments had decided not to file claims in two areas: reciprocal claims and war damages, or human rights and the family. Therefore, all that is left is to draw up the proper documents.

He was asked if he could discuss the reactivation of the Central American Common Market, since Honduras and El Salvador have not initialed a peace agreement. He said no, the problem is rather complex. We insist on our original stand. First we have to settle the border issue to the satisfaction of both parties and then discuss the common market. This does not mean we cannot already begin talks on the guidelines or outline of a new common market and a new economic integration program but we insist the first thing to be discussed should be the border issue.

Is there pressure from outside Central America to begin common market operations, even at the expense of the mediation process between the two countries, he was asked. Not as far as Honduras is concerned, he replied. The Central American Common Market is not a matter for the Foreign Secretariat to discuss, because it is up to the Economy and Finance Secretariats. All the Foreign Secretariat studies is the legal aspect. We are not being pressured.

He was asked if he thought the peace treaty between Honduras and El Salvador would be signed before constitutional rule is achieved. The peace treaty is a general treaty which includes the border issue and the Central American Common Market, he replied. These matters require a lot of study and care. A de facto government is legally entitled to subscribe to and ratify treaties. There are no impediments on it, as many jurists think.

He was asked if a constitutional government has greater strength and a better image and whether it has the confidence of the national and international public. He said yes, and added that the peace treaty could not be reached under the de facto regime. We are trying to leave everything ready so the next administration will reach an agreement more easily and expeditiously, Perez Cadalso said.

Foreign Minister Perez Cadalso said the Central American government leaders' meeting has not been confirmed. He added that the meeting of Central American foreign ministers, though, is ready to be held in San Jose, Costa Rica, on 14-16 March.

NICARAGUA

BORGE SAYS DIGNITY WORTH MORE THAN U.S. DOLLARS

PA271719 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 0321 GMT 27 Feb 80 PA

[Text] Managua, 26 Feb (ACAN-EFE)--Nicaraguan Interior Minister Thomas Borge Martinez stated today that "Nicaragua is no longer a mouse nor the United States a cat".

In this way the influential revolutionary commander commented on the action of the U.S. House of Representatives of postponing for a third time the debate on the $75 million loan to this country.

The debate on the assistance requested by President Carter for Nicaragua for the second time in 150 years was held behind closed doors. The House of Representatives also approved amendments to the draft bill, establishing President Carter's power to suspend the financial cooperation in the event there is evidence of repression against unions in Nicaragua.

Questioned by newsmen of the newscast "Aqui Centroamerica" of Radio Corporacion, Commander Borge stated that the representatives "Are playing cat and mouse. But they forget that Nicaragua is no longer a mouse nor the United States a cat," the Sandinist leader remarked. Then he added that "The dignity of the Nicaraguans is worth more than dollars".

RADIO SANDINO REPORTS ON U.S. LOAN APPROVAL

PA280511 Managua Radio Sandino in Spanish 0300 GMT 28 Feb 80 PA

[Text] The U.S. House of Representatives has approved the $75 million loan to Nicaragua. We reiterate that this loan should be granted with no conditions attached.

The Voice of America reported not long ago that the U.S. House of Representatives had approved the $75 million loan to the Nicaraguan Government. The radio station did not say that the United States had placed any conditions on granting the loan. During the secret meeting held by the House of Representatives, the reactionary sectors--friends of Somoza who work in complicity with the CIA--were trying to place conditions on the loan.

Our people, government and vanguard--the Sandinist National Liberation Front--have said many times that the only condition we accept in receiving this loan is that no conditions be attached to it. We have also said that the Sandinist revolutionaries do not sell out or surrender.

WORKERS TAKE OVER SOVIPE COMPANY, DEMAND INVESTIGATION

PA241952 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 2212 GMT 23 Feb 80 PA

[Text] Managua, 23 Feb (ACAN-EFE)--A Nicaraguan construction company was taken over today by 90 workers of that enterprise who are demanding a government investigation of the company books.

The company in the "Solorzano-Villa-Pereira" (SOVIPE) company whose president, Enrique Pereira, left Nicaragua when the final insurrection that overthrew the government of Anastasio Somoza started.

The company workers said that they are demanding an investigation of the company and the intervention by the country's Attorney General's Office.

Leaders of the SOVIPE trade union reported that the company in question is selling raw material for construction to local firms and that the company's machinery has been taken out of the country and installedin Honduras and Guatemala.

Jose Matamoros Torres, a union spokesman, said that the workers are not on strike, that they are working as usual; however, they have taken over the company installations in order to prevent the sale of more raw material and the looting of the machinery in order to ship it out of the country.

The workers are also demanding that authorities investigate all SOVIPE subsidiaries in the country--that is, approximately six more companies.

ESTABLISHMENT OF PEOPLES MILITIA ANNOUNCED

PA210031 Managua Radio Sandino in Spanish 1800 GMT 20 Feb 80 PA

[Excerpts] Establishment of the Peoples Sandinist Militia was announced officially today. All Nicaraguans willing to defend the achievements of our revolution will be able to join the militia.

The announcement was made today at a news conference by Companero Sergio Ramirez Mercado, member of the government junta, Commander Humberto Ortega Saavedra, chief of the Sandinist Peoples Army [EPS] and defense minister, and Commander Eden Pastora, deputy minister of defense and chief of the militia. The conference was also attended by Companero Omar (Alpleden), responsible for the political and cultural affairs of the EPS.

According to information released at the news conference, the Peoples Militias are based on the republic's Constitution, put into effect following the triumph of the popular Sandinist victory, which envisages the participation of all Nicaraguans in the armed forces.

Participation will be on a voluntary basis but under oath. The oath will be included in the application form that applicants must sign.

To be accepted as a member of the peoples militias, applicants must be at least 16 years old and no older than 60, but this will not be a fundamental requirement for persons in good physical condition. Persons released [demonvilizados] from the EPS will also be able to join the militia. The militia uniform will be green trousers, brown shirts, black beret and black boots.

The basic duty of militiamen will be to be disciplined and to be courteous and respectful to their companeros.

It was also announced that the militiamen will be trained in hand-to-hand combat, weapons, dismounted drill, marksmanship, tactics and revolutionary and disciplinary subjects. The training will take place at work centers during nonworking hours or on weekends.

The EPS will give the Peoples Militia all support necessary through its political and cultural section.

Here is Commander Eden Pastora, chief of the National Militia, who will discuss the type of weapons that will be used and how the state will obtain them:

[Begin Pastora recording] We will get the arms the same way we got them during the war. We will be getting shotguns, (?38's), hunting rifles, and if the army finds it has too many organic weapons then we will also equip the militia with these. The thing is that we will arm the people, even if it has to be with sticks. [end recording]

[Begin Ortega recording] I want to add that we will train the militia, women, young persons, old persons, workers and peasants in the most modern techniques such as the army's [words indistinct] so that when we obtain these arms they will be able to use them, but in the event that we do not [words indistinct] the arms we have described to you, as Commander Pastora was saying, remember that the most important weapon is morale and the will to fight. Morale, supported by a stick and a rock, as Andres Castro used [words indistinct] in 1856 can defeat the enemy. [end recording]

[Begin Pastora recording] In other words, expanding on what the commander in chief has said, the people of Nicaragua will learn how to use the most modern weapons. [end recording]

[Begin Ortega recording] To honor those Indians who died in the 1978 struggle, during that week of February, to honor the Sandinist militants who at the head of those Indians also spilled their blood--Commander Camilo Ortega Saavedra and all the Sandinists who fell with him on 24 February 1978--to honor all those companeros who in that month of February participated in the seizing of Granada, in seizing Rivas on the 28th, to pay homage to all those heroes and martyrs, we have chosen 24 February to initiate the process that sooner rather than later will culminate in the national [word indistinct] of the Peoples Sandinist Militia. [end recording]

BRAZIL

FOREIGN MINISTRY EXPRESSES CONCERN FOR CAPTIVE AMBASSADOR

PY280030 Paris AFP in Spanish 2342 GMT 27 Feb 80 PY

[Text] Brasilia, 27 Feb (AFP)--It was reported here today that the Brazilian Foreign Ministry is following with concern the seizure of Brazilian Ambassador to Colombia Geraldo do Nascimento e Silva.

This statement was made by Foreign Ministry spokesman Bernardo Pericas, who indicated that the Brazilian ambassador was held with 29 other diplomats at the diplomatic mission of the Dominican Republic, which was seized by Colombian guerrillas.

All the diplomats were there attending a reception marking the independence of the Dominican Republic.

Brazilian Foreign Minister Ramiro Saraiva Guerreiro will make an official visit to Colombia 17-19 March, and the detention of Ambassador Nascimento e Silva could create obstacles to the good relations between the two nations, according to a diplomatic source.

PERU

FOREIGN MINISTRY ISSUES COMMUNIQUE ON U.S. EMBARGO

PY271510 Lima Domestic Service in Spanish 1200 GMT 27 Feb 80 PY

[Communique No 004/80 issued by the Peruvian Foreign Ministry in Lima on 26 February]

[Text] 1. As is well known, on 13 November 1979 the Peruvian Navy seized eight U.S. (fishing) vessels which were operating without the appropriate license within the 200-nautical-mile Peruvian maritime jurisdiction.

2. In view of this action, on 22 February 1980 the U.S. Government ordered an embargo on Peruvian exports to the United States.

3. The Peruvian foreign minister today summoned the U.S. ambassador to Peru to convey to him a strong protest against this new embargo whose coercive nature violates OAS principles and is, in fact, a regression to practices believed to have been abandoned and which affect the good relations between the two countries.

SURINAME

BAR ASSOCIATION AGREES TO FORM CIVILIAN COUNCIL

FL272038 Kingston Domestic Service in English 2030 GMT 27 Feb 80 FL

[Text] Radio Suriname today said that the Judge [as heard] and the National Bar Association have agreed to form a civilian council at the request of the military junta which ceased power on Monday. In a broadcast monitored in neighboring Guyana, Surinamese authorities said the civilian council would complement but not replace the government formed by the military council which is made up of mainly noncommissioned officers.

The broadcast also said the airport and borders would remain closed mainly because of a threat from deposed Prime Minister Henck Arron.